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A
LETTER
TO THE
Right Honourable,
EDWARD
Earl of Clarendon,
Lord High Chancellour
OF
ENGLAND.

By *Edward Bagshaw*, Student of
Christ-Church.

LONDON,
Printed for J. S. 1662

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LETTER

Right Honorable

EDWARD

Lord of the Treasury

London

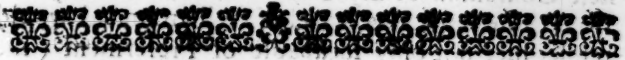
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ENGLAND

By Edward Bagehot, Esq.
of Christ Church.

London
Printed for J. S. 1862

(51)

To the Right Honourable *Edward*,
Earl of *Clarendon*, Lord High Chan-
cellor of *England*, &c.

Right Honourable,

I Am so much a Stranger to your Lordship, that I beleeve the subscribing my Name, will but little benefit your Lordships knowledge of me; and the cause about which I write, being meerly the clearing of my self, is of so petty concernment, that I am afraid, instead of procuring your Lordships good opinion, it may expose me to your Censure; and though I purge my self from all other my supposed Crimes, yet the very undertaking to trouble your Lordship with a matter so much below you, may render me guilty of a very transcendent presumption.

But, my Lord, since none who is made so considerable as to be reputed dangerous, can be too mean to appear in his owne just defence, and since your Lordship hath already suffered your Goodness so much to bee wrought upon, as in a manner to condemn me unheard; and seem to conceive of me, as I have been lately represented, for a direct Enemy unto the *Church*, and but meanly affected to the *State*; I thought it necessary, if for no other respect, yet for the sake of of Truth (which alwaies suffers in the Oppression of any one of her followers) to remove your Lordships mistakes, & by making a kind of Pub-

lick Confession of my Faith, to vindicate my self from those suspicions, which if well grounded would render mee not only incapable of Preferment (the want of which I shall never complain of) but likewise unworthy of any Protection.

To begin therefore with that which makes the loudest noyse in the World, and that is, a supposal that I am no friend to *Bishops*; I need say no more in justification of my self than what I have already asserted, not only in my Latine Dissertation upon that Subject, but likewise in the Preface to that very Book which first begat the suspicion --- I then said, that *I was a strict observer of the Doctrine of the Church of England, as it was contained in the thirty nine Articles* (as my several Treatises against * *Atheism*, † *Socinianism*, * *Arminianism*, and † *Papery* doe witness) and for that which is the prime branch of Discipline, viz. *Episcopacy, or the subordination between Bishops and Presbyters*; I doe owne it to be of Apostolical Institution, that is, as I understand it, *Jure Divino*; at least I think I am able to say as much for the Order of Bishops in the Church, as any can for the Baptizing of Infants, for the change of the Sabbath, for Tithes, or for any thing else, which hath no particular Divine precept, but only Primitive practice and example to warrant it. And therefore in conformity to this Principle of mine, when the Bishops were sunk lowest, not only for Pomp, but likewise for Reputation; and when no temptation either of profit or convenience, but rather the contrary, could work upon me, I then chose to be Ordained by one of them; which is a sufficient Argument of my reality and steadfastness. This, my Lord, was my judgement then, and bating the words *Jure Divino* (which unless they be taken in a limited and restrai-

*De Presbyteris
& Episcopis.*
Pref. to the
Great Question
&c.

* Discourse about
Jesus, and the Resurrec-
tion.

† Dissertatio-
nes Anti-Soci-
nianæ.

* Treatise of
Gods Decrees.

† Treatise a-
gainst the Pops
infallibility.

The Reverend
and Learned
Bishop Brown-
riggs, on Nov.
3. An. 1659.

restrained sense, are more than the Cause will bear, because there is no mention of Bishops as a distinct order in Scripture) it is my judgement still, for though I know that φιλοπρωτεία, or an *ambitious affectation of Primacy*, and all manner of *Lordliness* is to bee avoyded by *Church-officers*, yet I could never see any reason why there might not as well be different places and degrees for the Rulers of the Church; as it is evident there is difference of gifts, and great disparity of endowments : So that for the order of *Bishops*, as chosen by, and ruling with their *Presbyters*, and by consent acting in an eminent way of Power, I acknowledge it to be a Primitive usage, and accordingly I have been, and am likely alwaies to prove an Asserter of them.

Having thus cleared my self from that, which because of your Lordships great devotion to the *Church of England* in its present Constitution, was most likely to prejudice me in your Lordships thoughts. I shall next give an Account of my inclination to the *Civil Government*; and though I can make it appear, that during our late Confusions, I passed my life with so much innocence, and so little compliance to the then usurping Powers, that not one Publick Action I did but is capable of a fair and equitable Plea, yet since an *Act of Indemnity and Oblivion* is already passed, I think it my duty so farre to comply with his Majesties intention in granting that Act, as not to mention any thing, how defensible soever, which hee hath commanded should be utterly forgotten.

To give therefore my present sense, I can sincerely profess, that I have not only a Loyal, but a most Affectionate esteem for his Majesties Person and Government,

vernment; for since, besides the general obligation of a Subject, I am bound by my Religion to prize Gratitude above all things, I could not be just should I not most earnestly desire the happiness of that Prince, unto whose single endeavours I owe both my *Civil and Religious Liberty*; for he must needs be a very great stranger in this our *Israel*, who doth not acknowledge that his Majesties Personal and Passionate interposing did confirm our *Indemnity*, and his most pious and unequalled Declaration hath sufficiently evidenced, that he is not unwilling to indulge the utmost extent of sober and Christian *Liberty*; which are expressions of so much goodness, in the midst of so great Power, and after so many provocations, that he hath not the heart of a Man, much less of a Christian, who doth not alwaies preserve a thankful remembrance of them; I am sure they are so deeply impressed upon me, that if in any Writing of mine there be so much as a word, which can be wrested to the lessening of his Majesties just Authority, I intreat your Lordship to take notice that I doe hereby utterly disown it, as being directly contrary to my professed Principles, which lead me to no one point of outward practise more strictly, than an exact and punctual obedience unto His Majesties Commands..

I must confesse, that ever since I became a Christian, which stile I do not own, either to my Birth, or Education; (having then sensibly experimented the great difficulty of beleeving) I alwaies doubted whether the Magistrates Power did properly extend to things of a *Religious Concernment*; and accordingly I handled that point, while it was *Res integra*, and before
ever

ever there was any fear of Imposing; But since the
 Parliament now have decided that Controversie, and
 put the matter out of Question, I think my self, not
 only discharged from meddling with it, but likewise
 concluded by what I have already declared, which Preface to the
Great Quelli-
on. &c.
 was in these very words; *That though for the present,*
I make use of that Indulgence, which His Majesty hath
been pleased to allow unto Tender Consciences, that is,
to all Rational and sober Christians (the continuance of
which, I dare not so much wrong His Majesties Goodnes;
as once to question) yet should His Majesty be prevail-
ed upon, for some Reason of State, to enjoin outward
Conformity; I am resolved, by the help of God, either
to submit with chearfulness; or else to suffer with silence.
For as there is an Active Disobedience, which is, to Re-
sist; so there is a Passive Disobedience, and that is, to
Repine; neither of which I can by any means approve of;
since whatever I cannot conscientiously do, I think my
self obliged to suffer for, with as much joy, and with as
little resistance, as if any other Act of Obedience were
called for from mee. I may perhaps be too partial
 to my self, but certainly in general I may pronounce,
 that whoever preserves this Temper, let his Judge-
 ment be what it will, in reference to Ceremonies; yet
 hee cannot be supposed incompatible with waies of
 Publick safety: since hee that quietly suffers the Pe-
 nalty of any Law, I mean, where it is a Law merely
 of outward Order, doth as really fulfil the intent of
 it, as hee that actually performs all its Injunctions;
 for such kind of Obedience doth argue a more than
 ordinary degree of Love, and that, in the Apostles
 sense, *is the fulfilling of the Law.* And without speak-
 ing any thing in my own Commendation, my silence
 under

under my Illegal exclusion from my place in *Christ Church*, and my late voluntary forsaking a Living I was possessed of, that I might prevent any possibility of seeming to disobey Publick Authority, doth sufficiently proclaim the peaceableness of my Temper.

But, my Lord, should I ever have so far stepped out of the bounds of my Calling, as to write a Publick *Memento* (which in the very name of it, contradicts the Act of *Oblivion*) should I have so much aspersed the present Government, as to say, *That Defamers of the Government, if Presbyterians, scape better than their Accusers: That Promoters and Justifiers of the Murder of the late King, are still continued Publick Preachers, and can come off for Printing and Publishing down-right Treason, when I have much ado to escape for telling it.* Should I have said, *That great dangers are still remaining, in not preferring the Kings Friends*, (as if his Majesty would prefer any, but those that were of unsuspected Loyalty) should I have added further, *That the danger is great, and number also of ill-chosen Justices: All which passages directly tend not only to defame the Government, but to render it ridiculous, as if it were not politick enough to preserve it self.* Should I, after I had in some former Pamphlet expressly libelled your Lordship, afterwards by making some dull Aphorisms about a *Favourite*, labour to abuse you to your face; I should then think I had done enough to deserve, not only the Name, but likewise the Punishment, that is due to one that is factious and turbulent.

Yet, my Lord, all this, and something worse is said in Print, by one Mr. *L'Estrange*, a Gentleman, whom I never saw, but yet I have heard so much ill

of

of him, that I think my self obliged to thank him for his Defamations of mee; since, by confessing himself, in the same Book, to be guilty of *Drunkenness and Prophanenesse*; hee hath said much more than I can knowingly charge him with, and I am sure more than enough to discredit his own Testimony. For hee that is neither *Sober* to himself, nor *Religious* to God, cannot possibly be *Just* and *Civil* to men; and *Impiety* will easily lead him to *Forgery*: I shall not therefore seem to plead my own Concernment against him, since my Credit and Esteem with Good men is either very little, and then my sollicitousness will but little promote it; or else it is so great, that it is already placed beyond the Reach of such Rude Assaults and Battery, and needs not my own Pen for its Defence and Vindication.

But, my Lord, how careless soever I am of securing my own Fame, yet in zeal to the Publick Honour and Faith of our Nation, I must take leave to say this, that for any to dedicate a Book to your Lordship (who are by your place the great Conservator of our Laws) and in it presume to break that very Law, which His Majesty hath appeared to be most tender of, and that so openly, as to revive the mention of our War, under the Title of *Rebellion*, to call the *Lords and Commons* then assembled in Parliament, a Company of *Schismatics and Rebels*; and with them, to asperse the whole City of *London*, who either never intentionally forfeited, or else have Nobly redeemed the mistake of their Loyalty: This, my Lord, is an insolence of so infectious a Nature, that, if your Lordship doth not suppress it; men who love their Honour above their

lives, will not think themselves fairly dealt with. For I must leave it to your Lordship to judge, how little security wee may expect from any of our old Laws, and how little Obedience can justly be exacted unto the New ones; if, in the face of the world, and with your Lordships Privity, nay under your Protection, our late *Magna Charta* can be, in the very Terms and Design of it, so apparently violated.

I know very well, that the Person who doth this, presumes much upon his former Loyalty, and would make his past Services compound for his present Frenzy; and truly, my Lord, I must confess, that had all this ill Language been vented by one of whose honesty there never had been any suspicion; had one defied the *Presbyterians*, (as this Author is pleased to call all that are not of his, that is, that are of any Religion) whose *Life*, or at least whose *Loyalty* had been untainted; then the worthiness of the Person would very much have mitigated the infamy of his Slanders: but for *Shimei* to curse *Absalom*; for *Cromwells Spy* to cry out *Treason*; for the *Protectors Earwigge*, to rayl upon the *Kings Enemies*; this is a thing so very indecent, and incongruous, that nothing but your Lordships condemning *Master G. Strange* to his owne *Whip*, or, because that is not smart enough, to the *Beadles*, will ever cure his Lask, or bring him within any tollerable compass of sobriety.

I would not willingly, while I plead for the keeping of our Lawes by others, be found a Transgressor of them my self; yet since he doth bear himself so much upon his Innocence, as if hee needed not the Lawes protection, I must crave leave to repeat what I know your Lordship is fully acquainted with, that this
very

very Pamphleter did heretofore frequently sollicite that he might be admitted to private Conference with *Oliver*, and humbled himself to so low an ebbe of baseness, that he often brought his Fiddle under his Cloak to facilitate his Entry; and when he saw that crafty Tyrant would not admit of one, whom hee knew unfit for the management of a serious Treason; hee then by little Bribes, bestowed upon his nearest Attendants, shewed how willing hee was to purchase Access at any Rate; All which Attempts were nothing else, but so much unshedged Treason; which would not so long have fluttered in the dark; had but that Tyrant thought him worthy of employment, and added wings unto his waxen disposition.

And thus, my Lord, though perhaps with more brevity, than the Cause, yet greater length than your Lordships Occasions will bear, I have not only defended my self, but likewise uncased my Accuser, for whom while I implore your Lordships Mercy (for as he stands thus naked in his colours, *Justice* will never spare him) I begg nothing for my self, but so much *Equity*, that I may have leave to plead my own cause at your Lordships Bar, before you conclude mee guilty; and since, I doubt not but your Lordship will allow, that difference in Opinion about *Religious Matters*, may easily be reconciled to a candid pursuance of the same *Civil Interests*; since diversity in *Habits*, need not alter the disposition in *Hearts*; and since hee that desires sincerely to serve God, ought not to be counted a stranger, because hee serves him not in his neighbours fashion: As long as there is an Eternal Truth in such kind of Principles, and Moderation enough in your Lordship to close with them,

I shall not so much wrong your Goodness, as to de-
 spair of your Favour: And though the greatest part
 of your Lordship's Followers, may perhaps croud to
 you for the Eminence of your Place, and the Height
 of your Power; Yet I can assure your Lordship, that
 your great Personal Worth, and the Excellence of
 your Civil accomplishments, together with that
 strict League of Friendship, which such Resemblance
 of Virtuous Qualities must needs produce, between
 your Lordship, and that Right Honourable and truly
 Noble Person, to whom I am related, are solely re-
 flected upon by mee, when I take leave thus publickly
 to profess my self

Mr. Lorr,

Drury-Lane,
 May 10. 1661.

Your Lordships most humble
 and most obedient Servant,

EDWARD BAGSHAW.

P. I. N. I. S.

